REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3, 6-15, 17-21, 23-29 and 61-68 are pending. Claims 10-12, 27-29 and 65-66 are withdrawn from consideration. No claim is allowed.

Claim 62 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed. It is presumed that the examiner intends to refer to claim 63. Configuring the first device after the player has selected it for play in the tournament is described in FIG. 18 and at page 46, lines 25-32; page 47, lines 13-31. This fully complies with the written description requirement and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9, 13-15, 17-26, 61, 62, 65 and 67-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker '163, in view of Walker '486 and Shulman, all of record. This rejection is respectfully traversed. There is no reference or passage cited by the examiner that teaches that a gaming unit selected by a player is first configured for playing in a tournament when a tournament is in progress and, after an identifier is received of the player, and remaining playing time determined, the gaming machine is enabled to play in a tournament thereby allowing a player to use the gaming units to join the tournament in progress. Walker '173 does not indicate that the player may configure a game device while a tournament game is already in progress or that the player may do this after he has selected a gaming machine to play which is configured to play in a tournament. Walker '486 only mentions that some software may be in a central controller and some software may be in the I/O device, such as a video game console. Col. 14, lines 25-28. However, that is not downloading or enabling the gaming unit in a limited duration participation tournament at the event of receiving a player identifying at the gaming unit. There is no suggestion to modify Walker '486 nor would it be obvious to one of ordinary skill to modify Walker '486 in such a manner.

The examiner interprets Shulman as showing a method by which a player can enter a tournament in progress. Shulman is directed to a series of poker games. Claims 1, 21, 61 and 67 are amended to recite that the tournament has a time duration. When the time expires, the tournament ends and if there is a winner, the payout is awarded. The

examiner alleges that a poker tournament could have a time duration. However, a poker tournament also can only end when there is one player left, the winner. Thus, it is submitted that the concept of a definite time duration and the necessity of determining a winner does are inconsistent regarding a poker tournament. Thus, it is again submitted that Schulman is deficient of the concepts of both the duration of the time the player may play based on his identifier, and the concept of the time remaining in the tournament in progress. Accordingly, it is not obvious to combine Shulman with the remaining references.

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that claims 1-3, 6-15, 17-21, 24-26, 61, 62, 65 and 67-68 are unobvious over the combination of references and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 63 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Walker '163 in view of Walker '486, Shulman and Walker '173. The examiner adds Walker '173 as showing the configuration of certain gaming machines according to the player's preferences once the player's identification is authenticated. Not included in such preferences are entry into a tournament, the time remaining in which a player may participate and enablement of the gaming machine for the duration of the tournament for which the player is authorized. It would be unobvious to include such items in the configuration of the devices in Walker '173 since Walker '173 applies to downloading for games that have not yet been initiated by the player. There is no suggestion that downloading can occur while any game is in progress. Accordingly, it is submitted to be unobvious to combine Walker '173 with Walker '163, Walker '486 and Shulman. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims are patentable over the cited art of record. Additional limitations recited in the independent claims or the dependent claims are not further discussed because the limitations discussed above are sufficient to distinguish the claimed invention from the cited art. Accordingly, applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable.

Applicants hereby petition for any additional extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension or any further fee required in connection with the filing of this Amendment is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 504480 (Order No. IGT1P280). Should the examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,

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